

THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHISM

piety, insensible to moral or physical fear, there was, nevertheless, something mysterious and inscrutable in his bearing and character. But of all the foreign cardinals he was the only one that the Romans loved and respected. He was intimate with Alfonso da Vadaterra, with whom, as also with Fra Raimondo and with Fra Gonsalvo, the Dominican prior of Santa Sabina, he discussed the situation with much apparent frankness. ^tfIn good sooth," he said one day to Fra Gonsalvo, in reference to the threats of the Romans, " I tell you that, even if I have to die for it, I shall choose no one for Pope save whom I wish. And why should I deem it an unworthy end, to die at the hands of this people and in this holy city where so many thousand saints have battled for the truth ?"¹ Regarded by Catholic writers, in the light of his subsequent career, as an astute dissembler and designing hypocrite, it is, nevertheless, difficult for the impartial student of Church history not to recognize in Pedro de Luna a man of upright life and high ideals, zealously striving to find where the hidden jewel of truth lay concealed, and to follow where he deemed that the light led.

But there was another personage, not a member of the Sacred College, upon whom many eyes were turned in Rome at this crisis in the history of the Church. Bartolommeo Prignano was born at Naples, shortly before 1320, of a father who was by origin a native of Pisa, and of a Neapolitan mother. As Archbishop of Acerenza, and assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, he had resided at the court of Avignon, and was thoroughly conversant with the affairs and administration of the Church. As we saw, he had at first opposed Catherine, and had afterwards been impressed by her sanctity, though we do not know how far he had had any personal intercourse with her. He had come to Rome with Pope Gregory, by whom he had been promoted to the Archbishopric of Bari, and was now acting as Vice-Chancellor of

¹ Deposition of Fra Gonsalvo, *Archivio faticano*, LIV. 15, f. 58. The friar states (MS. «/., f. 63 t>.) that the Romans had such confidence in the Cardinal of Aragon that they would have been perfectly contented if he had been elected Pope.